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DEPARTMENT FOR G/TIP, WHA/CEN, WHA/PPC

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [KCRM](#) [PHUM](#) [KWMN](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [SMIG](#) [KPAO](#) [PM](#)
SUBJECT: PANAMA: FM SATISFIED WITH TIP REPORT

REF: STATE 78794

¶1. (SBU) "The 2007 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report does not look too different from last year's report. That is good to see," said First Vice President and Foreign Minister Samuel Lewis after Ambassador delivered reftel demarche on June 11. Ambassador noted the report acknowledged positive steps Panama had taken to fight trafficking, including the first conviction of a TIP-related offender and an ongoing public awareness campaign. Lewis said it was good to see that Panama received a Tier Two rating again this year. (Note: Panama first appeared in the TIP report in 2004 and has received a Tier Two rating since then. End note.)

¶2. (SBU) Ambassador discussed ways Panama could continue to improve its anti-trafficking record, including dedicating additional resources and ending the alternadora visa program. Lewis did not comment on these ideas. He said he appreciated receiving an advance copy of the report, and anticipated there would be significant press coverage of it.

¶3. (SBU) Comment: Trafficking continues to be a sensitive subject for Panama. Lewis' relief at having missed Tier Two Watchlist status was apparent. Post will continue to engage with the GOP on this issue, using the progress noted in the 2007 report as a departure point for additional efforts and cooperation.

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